Email Etiquette

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Who would have thought we would be communicating in cyberspace? On line, interaction is becoming as common as picking up the phone, faxing correspondence or dropping by someone's office. However, in order to communicate effectively via e-mail, courtesy guidelines should be followed. Rather than being accused of not minding your manners when communicating electronically, this information has been created for you. It is meant to assist you in putting your "best electronic self forward." It also is meant to help you create messages with the same tact you use when talking with others.

How to Add Warmth to your E-mail Message:

With voice-mail messages, your inflection sets the tone; with in-person interaction, your body language communicates the message.
However, with e-mail, the only "non-verbal" on which the receiver has to base the message tone is your words.

Putting Your Best Message Forward
Like it or not, when sending an e-mail message, a letter or a fax, you are judged by the quality of your writing. No matter how casual you choose to make the tone of your message, capital letters should be used appropriately

How to Integrate Tact and Diplomacy into E-Mail when E-Mail Messages Should Not Be Sent-

Think about it. Your voice intonation and body language can account for the way others interpret your messages. That is why in some instances, picking up the phone or meeting with others face-to-face may prove to be more effective than delivering news electronically. Here are a few instances in which you might want to think twice before transmitting that e-mail message:
When you are uncertain how a person will react to a "touchy" subject, consider an alternate form of communication.

When receiving a message that is confidential in nature, treat it with respect by not sharing it with others.

Before copying people on your messages, ask yourself if the information is pertinent to them. If it isn't, spare them from receiving another message.

<u>The 10 Most Commonly Made Electronic Mail Faux Pas</u>

1. Not checking your e-mail with the same regularity that you do your voice-mail messages.

2. Not labeling the subject of your message to reflect the message content.

3. Not responding to e-mail messages in the same prompt manner that you do other forms of communication.

4 Not proofing an electronic message with the same attention that you give to a document in hard copy form.

5 Being verbose in your e-mail communication rather than being succinct.

6 Sending out unsolicited mass-mailings that could be considered junk mail to recipients.

7. Labeling a message as "Urgent" so that the receiver will give it priority unnecessarily.
8. Not listing a phone number and fax in your message so that the recipient has this information at hand.

9. Trying to be humorous in your messages when it could be misinterpreted as sarcasm.

10. Sending copies of e-mail to people in address groups rather than being more selective about who is receiving messages.